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SENSITIVE
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FOR EUR/CARC

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [PREL](#) [EWWT](#) [PARM](#) [GG](#)
SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR U.S. GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE IN GEORGIAN
SALVAGE OPERATIONS IN POTI

SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED - NOT FOR INTERNET DISTRIBUTION.

¶1. (U) This is an action request. Please see paragraph 5.

¶2. (SBU) During the August 2008 conflict between Russian and Georgia, Russian air and ground forces inflicted significant damage to the military and coast guard side of the port in Poti. Several vessels were attacked by Russian air forces, short range ballistic missiles and ground forces employing explosives. Many of these vessels were scuttled at their piers and a few are partially submerged in the harbor. The scuttled vessels are a significant obstacle to the resumption of normal operations by the Georgian coast guard and navy.

¶3. (SBU) The Georgian Border Guards and the Georgian Ministry of Defense have formally request for USG assistance in removing their vessels from the water. The Ministry of Defense will scrap the navy vessels that have been destroyed. The Border Guards intend to salvage and repair one of their three vessels that was scuttled pier side and they intend to remove spare parts from the other two.

¶4. (SBU) The navy vessels that were sunk or destroyed in the port are the Tbilisi (302), Dioskulia (303), the Tskaltubo (101), and the hydrographic vessel (082). The Georgian coast guard vessels that were sunk or destroyed in the port are the P-204, P-205, and the Ayeti. The coast guard intends to repair only the Ayeti.

¶5. (SBU) Action Request. Post understands that the PCC is supportive of Georgian requests for possible U.S. assistance with salvage operations. Therefore, post supports this request and asks that the Department approach the Department of Defense and U.S. Naval Forces Europe to consider a positive response to this request by sending the requisite support to Poti in order to assist in the removal of these damaged vessels from their pier locations.
TEFFT